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Rep. Jack Bergman  
566 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for a Fresh Water Research Center in Elmwood Township, Leelanau County

Dear Rep. Bergman:

Various entities located within the Grand Traverse Region are collaborating to build a Fresh Water Research Center on the existing Discovery Center & Pier property on West Grand Traverse Bay. This research center will become the hub for the research, development, and commercialization of fresh water and marine technologies and their applications affecting the Great Lakes and similar fresh water systems throughout the world. Unique to this vision are initiatives to support early start-up businesses, such as incubation and accelerator space, along with requisite labs. Significant economic development is expected to result from this collaborative.

Areas of Focus

- Autonomous and remote technology – Machine learning and AI, marine shipping/freight & logistics research and development, acoustic communication and simulations
- Freshwater and marine technologies – Water quality and analysis, watershed and fisheries management
- Great Lakes modeling – Observation platforms, data collection, and processing
- Emerging Technologies and Innovation – Future technologies, innovation hub/start-up space, and smart Great Lakes initiatives

With a focus on community, education, and innovation around the Great Lakes ecosystems, this research center will become a focus for learning, research and development, and economic development for the Grand Traverse Area for many years to come. Further, it will establish the Grand Traverse Region as a global hub for Great Lakes fresh water learning and research – also establishing Michigan’s role as a leader in this space – “keeping it PURE”. By co-locating research, education, and commercialization partners, this new facility will generate tremendous opportunity for small business development.

Leelanau County supports this vision and we hope that you will as well, by including it for consideration in the FY 2023 Community Project Funding requests.

Sincerely,

William J. Bunek, Chairman  
Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

# Fresh Water Research & Innovation Center



## Northwestern Michigan College

- Home for Great Lakes Water Studies Institute
- Learning & Applied Research
- Hub for project-based learning supporting academic programming and experiential learning at the associate and baccalaureate levels
- Professional development and workforce training – focusing on remote sensing, autonomous vehicles and other water-related technologies



## Michigan Tech

- Grant supported water-related research
- Autonomous Watercraft control
- Cyber-security & computational research as it relates to fresh water
- Lakebed mapping research
- Advanced education opportunities
- Inland water studies – quality and resiliency of water supplies

## Areas of Focus

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## DISCOVERY CENTER & PIER

- Conduit between community and the research / commercialization occurring in the space
- Program development that is public-facing to highlight research being conducted and its application
- Inspire the workforce of tomorrow in the area of fresh water preservation and development as well as the businesses that support it



- Convenor / Economic Development Lead

## 20 FATHOMS

- Home for 20Fathoms Center for Innovation
- Incubator & Accelerator office space
- Maker / Tinker / Light Manufacturing Lab Space
- Wet Lab Space
- Classroom / Seminar / Auditorium Space (shared) for larger meetings, symposiums, visiting lecturers
- Workforce development